REMARKS

Applicant appreciates the examiner's review of the present application and respectfully requests reconsideration in view of the preceding amendments and the following remarks.

The examiner has objected to the drawings as not showing the "AIN" aspect of the invention. Enclosed herewith is amended FIG. 2, with changes shown in red, which is requested to be approved by the examiner. More particularly, applicants have amended block 120 to list that caller identifying information may include "ANI" (please note this is different from AIN) as well as IVR information. Support for this can be found in the specification at least on page 7, lines 17-26, as well as page 11, lines 1-8.

The examiner next rejects claims 1-4, 6-12, and 14-19 under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Number 5,278,898. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. Applicant urges that a cited patent to Cambray et al. does not teach going to a database with caller identifying information and retrieving information about the customer based on the caller identifying information and utilizing that information to establish call prioritization.

Cambray, column 3, lines 15-18, for example, discloses that

the indicia from which prioritization is accomplished is "age" of the call, that is, the amount of time that the call has been "on hold". Although Cambray states that other types of indicia are contemplated, there is no teaching or suggestion by Cambray to search a customer database and identify a specific customer database record corresponding to the caller identifying information obtained, and subsequently retrieving information from the identified customer's database record, the retrieved information being relevant to call prioritization. Subsequently, the present invention teaches to create a call record for each connected call which includes not only caller identifying information, but also call priority data which is based upon the retrieved call prioritization information. See generally, for example, independent claims 1, 7, and 15.

Applicant urges that neither Cambray alone, or any of the other cited references, teach such a system. Accordingly, applicant urges that independent claims 1, 7, and 15 as well as their dependent claims are not anticipated by the patent to Cambray or any other art of record.

The examiner next rejects claims 5 and 13 as being obvious over Cambray in view of U.S. Patent Number 5,692,033 to Farris.

Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

The examiner believes that Cambray does not teach the claimed device except for the AIN aspects of the invention of Ferris. Indeed, applicant does not utilize AIN (Advanced Intelligent Network), but rather makes use of Automatic Number Identification (ANI), which is significantly different. Further, as previously stated, Cambray does not teach the claimed device and, in particular, a system or method which can utilize information obtained by the customer to access the database and retrieve customer specific information from which call prioritization information will be ascertained and/or generated.

Accordingly, applicant urges that claims 5 and 13 as well as any of the other amended claims are not obvious over Cambray in view of Ferris or any other art of record.

Accordingly, applicant believes that all of the pending claims are in condition for allowance.

The examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned, applicant's attorney of record, to facilitate advancement of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: April 3, 2001

In the Claims:

Claims 1, 3, 4, 7, and 15 have been amended as follows:

1.   **(Amended)** A method of prioritizing calls connected to an automated telephone system comprising the steps of:

connecting a plurality of calls to said automated telephone system;

obtaining caller identifying information from each of said connected calls;

placing each or said connected calls on hold;

searching a customer database and identifying a customer database record corresponding to the caller identifying information **obtained** for each connected call;

retrieving information from said identified customer database records that is relevant to call prioritization;

creating a call record for each connected call, each call record including said caller identifying information and **call priority data based upon** said retrieved call prioritizing information;

inserting each created call record into a hold queue; and

directing a connected call to an available agent based on [the retrieved]**said** call [prioritizing information]**priority data**.

3. **(Amended)** The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said step of selecting a connected call to direct to an available agent comprises displaying a list of call records stored in said hold queue, including said caller identifying information and said call [prioritizing information]priority data for each said connected call on at least one available agent display and manually selecting a connected call to direct to said available agent.

4. **(Amended)** The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said step of selecting a connected call to direct to an available agent comprises;

comparing the retrieved call [prioritizing information]priority data stored in each call record with at least one predetermined prioritization attribute;

arranging the call records in the hold queue according to the [prioritizing information]call priority data comparison; and

automatically directing a connected call that enjoys a highest priority position in said hold queue arrangement to an available agent.

7.   **(Amended)** A hold queue prioritizing system comprising:

an automated telephone system;

a call receiver/director for connecting a plurality of calls to said automated telephone system;

a customer database including a plurality of database records, each database record including caller identifying information and information relevant to call prioritization;

a means for obtaining **caller** identifying information from each of said plurality of calls connected to said automated telephone system;

at least one hold queue coupled to said call receiver/director, said at least one hold queue for holding call records related to said plurality of connected calls;

a plurality of call center agent terminals coupled to said automated telephone system for handling said connected calls; and

a hold queue prioritizer **responsive to said caller identifying information from each of said plurality of calls connected to said automated telephone system,** for retrieving at least a portion of said call prioritizing information stored in each said database record corresponding to each connected call and for selecting a connected call to direct to an available agent responsive to said **at least a portion of said** call prioritizing information.

15.   **(Amended)** A system for prioritizing calls on hold and connected to an automated telephone system comprising:

a call receiver/director for receiving a plurality of calls connected to said automated telephone system and for directing said plurality of connected calls to a plurality of agent terminals coupled to said call receiver/director;

a customer database, including customer database records including caller identifying information and call prioritizing information;

a hold queue prioritizer, coupled to said call receiver/director, said hold queue prioritizer including:

a means for obtaining caller identifying information from each of said plurality of connected calls;

a means **responsive to said obtained caller identifying information,** for searching said customer database to identifying customer database records corresponding to said obtained caller identifying information for each of said plurality of connected calls, and retrieving said call prioritizing information from each of said identified customer

database records;

a means for creating a call record for each of said

plurality of connected calls, each call record

including said caller identifying information and

said call prioritizing information;

at least one hold queue, coupled to said call hold queue

prioritizer for storing said created call records; and

a means for selecting a connected call to direct to an

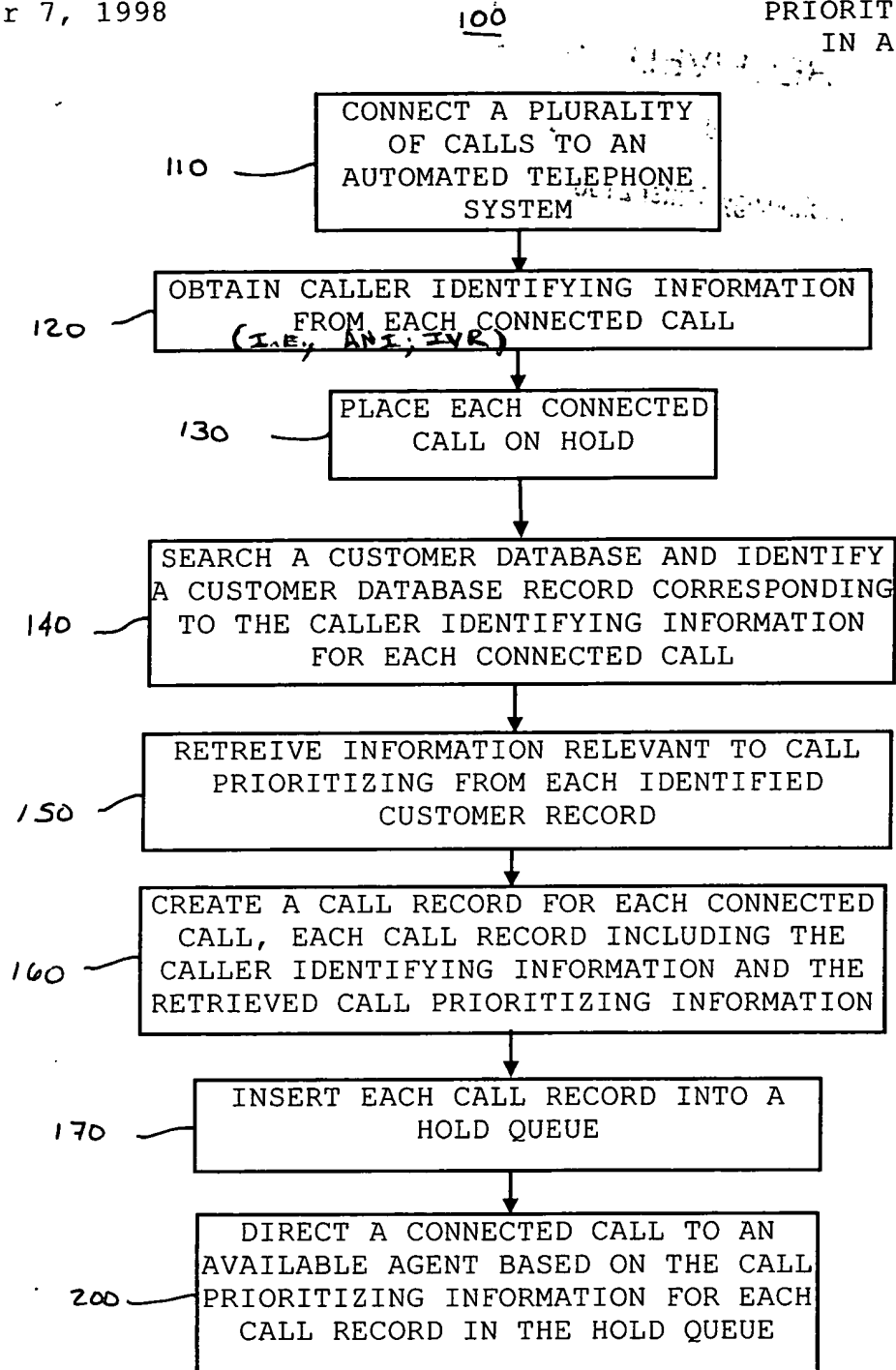available agent based on said call prioritizing information.

DAVOX-159XX
October 7, 1998

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SYST■ AND METHOD OF
PRIORITIZING CALLS
IN A HOLD QUEUE

110 ——— CONNECT A PLURALITY
OF CALLS TO AN
AUTOMATED TELEPHONE
SYSTEM

120 ——— OBTAIN CALLER IDENTIFYING INFORMATION
FROM EACH CONNECTED CALL
(I.E., ANI; IVR)

130 ——— PLACE EACH CONNECTED
CALL ON HOLD

140 ——— SEARCH A CUSTOMER DATABASE AND IDENTIFY
A CUSTOMER DATABASE RECORD CORRESPONDING
TO THE CALLER IDENTIFYING INFORMATION
FOR EACH CONNECTED CALL

150 ——— RETREIVE INFORMATION RELEVANT TO CALL
PRIORITIZING FROM EACH IDENTIFIED
CUSTOMER RECORD

160 ——— CREATE A CALL RECORD FOR EACH CONNECTED
CALL, EACH CALL RECORD INCLUDING THE
CALLER IDENTIFYING INFORMATION AND THE
RETRIEVED CALL PRIORITIZING INFORMATION

170 ——— INSERT EACH CALL RECORD INTO A
HOLD QUEUE

200 ——— DIRECT A CONNECTED CALL TO AN
AVAILABLE AGENT BASED ON THE CALL
PRIORITIZING INFORMATION FOR EACH
CALL RECORD IN THE HOLD QUEUE

FIG. 2